



NEWS RELEASE

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Operation Starlight II

US and UK medical Soldiers conduct joint training

STRENSALL, ENGLAND – Soldiers of US Army Europe’s 67th Forward Surgical Team (Airborne) and the United Kingdom’s 208th Field Hospital (Liverpool) conducted Operation Starlight II January 21-23, at the Army Medical Simulation Training Center in Strensall, England.

The joint hospital training exercise was designed to demonstrate the readiness of the American and British units, while testing their ability to integrate and perform the full spectrum of patient care, as the 208th FH (L) continues to prepare for its upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

“The main focus of this exercise is teamwork,” said Maj. Ray Jolly, the training major for the 208th FH (L). “It’s about developing that team, honing their skills, honing their abilities and creating an environment where they can deliver the highest standards of healthcare in some of the most challenging clinical environments in the world.”

Real-world scenarios and medical procedures were incorporated throughout the training enabling the units to improve their readiness by exercising joint medical team operations that mirror current and future deployment conditions.

“The time when we’re taking care of casualties is not the point at which you want to be figuring out when to do things, you want to have a smooth system and you want to have your protocols down,” explained Lt. Col. Patrick McAndrew, the commander of the 67th FST (ABN). “That is the reason that we’re partnering with the 208th – so that everything does go smoothly, and so that the right patient care is delivered at the right time.”

Operation Starlight II not only provided an invaluable opportunity to learn from one another, it also effectively replicated the current scenario being seen by the UK field hospital currently managing Bastion, the Role 3 hospital in Afghanistan, according to Col. Peter Jackson, the commander of the 208th FH (L).

“Although they went out and anticipated one situation, they immediately had a US Army FST bolted onto them. So [having the 67th] bolted on to us during this exercise is completely realistic, and the rapid integration of an FST into the field hospital is a very real scenario. It’s happening as we speak,” Jackson said.

Along with building teamwork, the training provided a chance for the medical troops to refresh and refine the skills of their craft.

“Downrange we do trauma resuscitation, follow them to the operating room, intensive care unit for stabilization and admission, or transfer them to higher-level care,” said Capt. David Ouano, a registered nurse with the 67th FST (ABN). “This is a really good way to simulate that.”

This was the second joint medical training exercise between UK medical troops and Soldiers of the Europe Regional Medical Command. In October 2010 the 30th Medical Command’s 212th Combat Support Hospital and the 208th FH (L) conducted Operation Starlight I in Hohenfels, Germany. During the JMEDEX the units exercised a 44-bed medical facility and tested numerous aspects of continuous medical operations in a field environment.

Headquartered in Miesau, Germany, the 67th FST (ABN) is one of only five airborne surgical teams in the US Army and is the only operational airborne forward surgical team in Europe.

The UK’s 208th Field Hospital is Liverpool’s own Territorial Army Hospital, which is made up of paid volunteers who are specialists and healthcare professionals from the UK’s National Healthcare System hospitals.

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Fincham, 30th MEDCOM Public Affairs NCOIC. For more information please contact him at christopher.fincham@us.army.mil.